

New Warylu Way tourist trail

Written by Alan Richardson

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From left: Glen Chidlow, CEO of Australia's North West; Elder & Traditional Owner Slim Parker; Karijini National Park Ranger Maitland Parker

Approximately 70 people from throughout the state travelled to Karijini on Monday the 17th of November to attend an official opening by the Senator, Glen Sterle, of the new Warlu Way trail.

Those present at the ceremony included state and federal politicians, tourism stakeholders and many representatives of the traditional owners of the Pilbara area. The ceremony was held in the stunning Karijini National Park near Tom Price. The Warlu Way is a tourist drive and experience trail that snakes its way through the rugged Pilbara landscape, linking the natural icons of the region with Exmouth to the south and Broome to the north. The official name of the trail - Warlu was so named because it means 'snake' in many of the Aboriginal language groups of the region, and this reflects the path that the trail takes across the landscape. Senator Sterle, commented on the project, and said "The Warlu Way Experience Trail will help encourage visitors to stay longer and explore further in a region that for a long time has been one of Australia's best kept secrets." The project has been a collaboration between the Department of Environment and Conservation, Tourism WA and Australia's North West Tourism, and has been assisted by a Federal Government grant through AusIndustry and the Australian Tourism Development Program. Glen Chidlow, CEO of Australia's North West Tourism, said that "The Warlu Way takes the traveller on a journey through some of Western Australia's greatest wonders, including the Ningaloo Reef and its amazing marine life, the rock art gallery on the Burrup Peninsula, Karijini and Millstream National Parks, and the turquoise waters of Cable Beach. It will encourage visitors to appreciate the landscape through which they travel and have an appreciation of the culture attached to the area." A major component of the Warlu Way is providing the traveller with an insight into the Indigenous culture of the region. Interpretive signs along the route provide reference to local language groups and outline stories applicable to the locale. "With the assistance of industry and agencies in the region, we aim to raise the profile of Indigenous tourism in the Pilbara, and the Warlu Way is the catalyst to assist in this process" said Mr Chidlow. The attendees of the ceremony who travelled to Karijini National Park from across the state were able to enjoy a celebration at the Karijini Eco Retreat, which is situated in the heart of the national park. A warm thankyou must be extended to the Gumula Corporation who owns the Eco Resort and who stand to represent some of the traditional owners of the region.